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THE JAMES ROBERT ANDERSEN ARCHIVE
A Contribution to the Development and Practice of the
Cultural and Political Economies of Nunatsiavut, NL

Mark David Turner and Tom Gordon
Harris Centre Applied Research Fund 2012-13



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FINAL REPORT

The James Robert Andersen Archive:

A Contribution to the Development and Practice
of the Cultural and Political Economies
of Nunatsiavut, NL

Mark David Turner
Independent Scholar
&
Tom Gordon, School of Music
Memorial University of Newfoundland

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Primary financial support for this project has been provided by the Leslie Harris Centre of Regional Policy and Development through its Applied Research Fund program. Additional logistical and financial support was received from the Makkovimiut Trust, as well as the Labrador Institute, the Research Centre for the Study of Music Media and Place, and the School of Music, all at Memorial University of Newfoundland.

The cataloguing and interpretation of a collection as diverse and rich as the James Robert Andersen Archive requires a scholar of equally diverse skill and rich accomplishment. We were fortunate to find that unique combination in the person of Mark David Turner, cultural historian, critical theorist, musician, film-maker, archivist and committed advocate for Labrador culture. Mark's skill set and remarkable commitment is the primary reason for the success of this project.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A renaissance man in an isolated northern settlement – a Labrador Samuel Johnson who was his own Boswell: James Robert Andersen (1919-2011) was a small business entrepreneur and a multi-disciplinary documentarian who lived and recorded life in his home community of Makkovik Labrador with singular intensity and insight. Over the last decade “Uncle Jim’s” extraordinary legacy of still images has been recognized nationally as the most comprehensive record of community life in Canada’s north. Together with his stories, moving image and audio recordings and the written records of his numerous entrepreneurial ventures, this legacy constitutes an unparalleled documentation of a life lived – both the life of the individual and the life of a community. After Uncle Jim’s death, the Andersen family sought a means of safeguarding his substantial legacy of record such that they would be accessible to the numerous communities – academic and interest-based – for which it would be instructive.

Two challenges accompanied this gift. The first was to inventory, describe and catalogue the voluminous archive distributed across a wide range of media: text, still image, moving image, audio, and miscellany. The size and scope of the collection signalled a daunting task, but one which has been accomplished with clarity and in conformity to international archival description standards. A more atypical challenge was devising a means of assuring appropriate access to this remarkable collection. In this case “appropriate” encompasses not only the usual community of academic researchers, but very particularly the people of Makkovik, Nunatsiavut and Labrador – the very people whose lives and culture are represented in the collection. This challenge was addressed by developing a co-sharing arrangement between the archive of deposit and three regionally-based cultural institutions. Memorial University’s Archives and Special Collections Division of the Centre for Newfoundland Studies in the Queen Elizabeth II Library had, through its Digital Archive Initiative, the capacity and interest to digitize the James Robert Andersen Collection. As this collection goes on-line the ongoing process of description is squarely the domain of the community partners in this project. The Torngâsok Cultural Centre at Nain, the White Elephant Museum at Makkovik and the *Them Days* Labrador Archive at Happy Valley-Goose Bay are all actively involved in the ongoing process of information exchange, the first archival initiative of its kind between Labrador archival organizations and Memorial.

The cataloguing process itself occasioned a first opportunity to develop a comprehensive overview of the collection’s contents and its rich potential for researchers of a wide range of interests. As a corollary to the cataloguing process itself, a collection syllabus has been developed that offers a glimpse of the possibilities that the James Robert Andersen Collection holds for researchers.

INTRODUCTION

Background

For the residents of Nunatsiavut, James Robert Andersen requires no introduction. Known deferentially as Uncle Jim throughout all of Labrador, the reasons for his notoriety are as diverse as his various artistic and entrepreneurial activities. Filmmaker, photographer, musician, storyteller, postmaster, boarding house proprietor, shopkeeper, sawmill operator are but a few of the many mantles Uncle Jim assumed across the nine decades of his life in Makkovik, a life richly documented in his personal archives.

Rationale

Working closely with the surviving members of Uncle Jim's family; the White Elephant Museum in Makkovik; the Centre for Newfoundland Studies, Archives and Manuscripts Division; the Torngâsok Cultural Centre; and the *Them Days* Labrador Archive, this project seeks to inventory and digitize Uncle Jim's textual, phonographic, photographic, and cinematographic materials in order to establish a permanent, dynamic archive that will be shared amongst all partnering organizations.

This project represents the confluence of a number of pre-existing partnerships between the Memorial University of Newfoundland and Nunatsiavut beginning with Dr. Tom Gordon's research on Moravian music and continuing with Mr. Mark Turner's work on the audiovisual history of Labrador. The magnitude of Uncle Jim's interests and output facilitated a natural connection in the context of this project, one supported by a number of branches of MUN including the School of Music, the Labrador Institute, the Research Centre for the Study of Music, Media and Place, and the Archives and Special Collections. At the community level, the preceding projects, as well as the one before you now, were supported by the tireless efforts of Ms. Joan Andersen of the White Elephant Museum at Makkovik. Ms. Andersen's profound commitment to the preservation of the history and culture of Makkovik would position her squarely at the centre. With her assistance, this project received its first funding from the Makkovimiut Trust, laying the foundation for the work that would follow. The collection was arranged and described by Mr. Mark Turner.

Objectives

Uncle Jim's diverse interests and accomplishments only serve to strengthen the importance of this collection; it will function as a vital and necessary resource to not only the broadest range of researchers, but even more importantly, to the inhabitants of Nunatsiavut directly. The materials in this collection reflect and embody important epoch in the history of Northern Labrador, an epoch bookmarked by Newfoundland and Labrador's entry into Canadian Confederation and the establishment of Nunatsiavut; their relevance extends far beyond the boundaries of the academy. This project seeks to ensure broad and continuous access to this singular set of documents.

Methodology

Uncle Jim's personal archive has been inventoried and described using standard archival procedures by Mark David Turner. The 85-page Collection Description (Appendix B attached) includes the following sections:

- Scope and Content of Collection

- Physical Extend of Collection
- Custodial History of Collection
- Biography of James Robert Andersen
- Statement of Restrictions on the use of the Collection
- Description of the Arrangement of the Collection
- Administrative History of the Collection
- Notes
- Collection Catalogue

In addition to the Collection Description, Mark David Turner prepared a 13-page Collection Syllabus (Appendix A attached) which offers an introduction to Uncle Jim Andersen and his role in coastal Labrador, a summary of the Collection's contents, access information, an outline of areas of research interest which the Collection will serve and some sample contents.

PROJECT DETAILS AND RESULTS

Biography of James Robert Andersen

James Robert Andersen was born 21 April 1919 at Makkovik, Nunatsiavut, Newfoundland and Labrador and died at Happy Valley-Goose Bay 23 March 2011, the youngest of four children to John Albert and Susan Mary Mitchell. Widely known as Uncle Jim, Mr. Andersen was a life-long resident of Makkovik where he worked variously as a fisherman, trapper, wharfinger, shopkeeper, boarding house proprietor, postmaster, sawmill operator, delivery contractor, and Air Labrador agent. Many of these businesses were jointly operated with his wife Susie Andersen (1914-2000). Outside of Makkovik, Uncle Jim is generally known for his prolific photographic work, commemorated in the 2008 retrospective at The Rooms *James Andersen: Over 50 Years of Taking Pictures* and his receipt of the Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Councils' Rogers Arts Achievement Award in 2009. He is the grandson of Torsten Kverna Andersen, a Norwegian immigrant and Hudson's Bay Company employee who, in 1860, was the first settler at what is presently Makkovik.

Along with his siblings Bridget, Edward and Inga, Uncle Jim was likely born at home by a mid-wife, his aunt Bertha Andersen. He attended school at Makkovik until grade eight when he quit to join his father fishing in the family rooms at Dunn's Island. Much like his son, the elder Andersen had a flair for entrepreneurship. Though the fishery served as his primary occupation, the elder Andersen operated one of the first sawmills as well as one of the first wind-generated sources of electrical power on the North Coast of Labrador. It appears he was also, for a time, the owner of the schooner *The Primrose*. For Uncle Jim, however, fishing and trapping did not hold the promise of a lifelong career and like many residents from the southern communities of present-day Nunatsiavut he sought employment at the expanding air force base on the southern shore of Lake Melville. In the winters of 1941 and 1942, Uncle Jim walked from Makkovik to Goose Bay to seek out seasonal work. The additional income was necessary to offset what were proving to be significant fluctuations in natural resource harvesting. The events of 1940 would provide him with added incentive to diversify his means income; that year he would establish two significant relationships. The first was with his wife, Susan Mary Eliza Flowers (widely

known as Aunt Susie). The second was with his camera, introduced to him by the Reverend George Harp.

From all appearances, Uncle Jim's experiences at Goose Bay seem to have given greater focus to those entrepreneurial skills he had begun to cultivate with his father. Upon his return to Makkovik, Uncle Jim resumed seasonal work as a salmon fisherman, assumed the operations of his father's sawmill, and inherited the position of postmaster from his Aunt Bertha, a position that would see him delivering mail by way of dog team and komatik under the auspices of Overland Limited. He also worked at the Labrador Services Division government store for a time. As he set about establishing his business interests, Uncle Jim supplemented his education with a range of distance courses. At the same time, his wife, Aunt Susie, began one of her many careers among which was a mid-wife. She would deliver 50 babies throughout her life.

Central as well to the lives of both Andersens was music. For Uncle Jim this interest led him to learn a variety of instruments: accordion, piano, cello, fiddle, mandolin, guitar and trumpet. It also, importantly led him to become a recorder of music, first on reel-to-reel magnetic tape and eventually on audiocassette. For Aunt Susie, her interest was as an enthusiast. The pair would come to call their residence The Springdale Music Center, so marked by a sign that hung above their front door. The Andersen residence would serve as an important site for musical rehearsal and production during the course of their lives. It would function as the site for the Moravian Church's choir practice; Uncle Jim would serve as choirmaster for some 50 years alongside his sister Inga as church organist. The Andersen residence would also serve as the site of more informal musical gatherings, ranging from large parties to intimate performances until Uncle Jim's death.

Yet as critical as music was to Uncle Jim's life, its practice seems to have made little sense without the presence of some manner of camera. The Reverend Harp had provided Uncle Jim with a means to realize and give structure to a documentary imperative. Between the receipt of the Reverend's gift in 1940 to the purchase of his very own Jiffy Kodak in 1951 until his passing in 2011, Uncle Jim has been the author of tens of thousands of photographs (it is unlikely that an exact number can be determined) and thousands of feet of moving images. Not only was every musical event at the Springdale Music Center a suitable subject, so was seemingly every event in Makkovik that Uncle Jim had attended. His camera would become his defining instrument.

As his business interests expanded, so too did his renown as a documentarian. The years following Confederation would see the rapid expansion of infrastructure of Northern Labrador; Uncle Jim would come to both anticipate and facilitate this development. Aside from its role as the Springdale Music Center, the Andersen residence served as one of the prominent boarding houses in Makkovik and the site of a convenience store, made legendary as the only business to possess a beer license in the community for a number of years. Uncle Jim also operated Jim's Deliveries, a contracting service that, in addition to working with large-scale development initiatives, also accepted contracts for snow clearing and garbage removal from the community of Makkovik. He also worked as the Air Labrador agent, a position that placed him in direct proximity to any and all visitors to the community. These interests, along with Uncle Jim's gregarious personality, worked to promote the distinction of the Andersen residence and name in

Makkovik and beyond, one predicated upon the capture and circulation of images as much as hospitality.

Ultimately, it was the connections Uncle Jim had cultivated throughout the course of his working life that brought his work as photographic documentarian to the public eye. Hans Blohm, a guest at Andersen's boarding house served as the catalyst for the Labrador Inuit Association/Torngâsok Cultural Centre's 2002 purchase of a number of still and moving image items that served as the basis for the 2008 exhibition *James Andersen: Over 50 Years of Taking Pictures* at The Rooms. The purchase and subsequent exhibition established his reputation as a documentarian. He would serve as the subject of a number of print articles as well as the subject of a 2006 episode of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's *Land & Sea*, receiving greater prominence both within the province and across the Canadian North. The Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council recognized his achievements as an artist in 2009 bestowing him the Rogers Arts Achievement Award.

Though his eulogizers place particular emphasis on the camera as his instrument of choice, it is perhaps more appropriate to conceive of Uncle Jim's art as less rooted in the practice of photography and more accurately rooted in the practice of documentary. Granting that his output of still and moving images far exceeds any other media he generated, the object of his production is almost uniformly, a concern for tradition. As a musician, storyteller, photographer, and even as a collector of media, his practice reveals a concern for custom and continuity

The James Robert Andersen Collection

The James Robert Andersen Collection is divided into 23 separate series meant to reflect Mr. Andersen's personal, civic, and religious lives, his diverse business interests, and his audiovisual work. Also represented in this collection are a selection of papers collected by his father, John Andersen as well as papers collected by his wife, Susie Andersen (née Flowers).

1.0 Personal: consisting of correspondence to and from family members, personal documents and assorted press clippings.

2.0 Writing: consisting of editorials, journals and public addresses.

3.0 Labrador and Nunatsiavut: consisting of newsletters and reports generated by federal, regional and educational agencies.

4.0 Moravian Church: consisting of correspondence, programs and meeting minutes.

5.0 Makkovik: consisting of funeral programs, school event programs, press clippings, and community newsletters.

6.0 Media Work: consisting of press clipping, certificates, correspondence and public addresses regarding Mr. Andersen's media work.

7.0 John Andersen Papers: a collection of papers produced by Mr. Andersen's father, John Andersen. This series consists of correspondence, business papers, Moravian Church materials, and personal notebooks.

8.0 Business, Fishery: consisting of correspondence, invoices, and licenses.

9.0 Business, Andersen's Shopping Centre: consisting of correspondence, invoices, certificates, licenses, and ledgers.

10.0 Business, Wharfinger: consisting of correspondence and waybills.

11.0 Business, Postmaster: consisting of correspondence, and ephemera.

12.0 Business, Alcohol: consisting of correspondence, and licenses.

13.0 Business, Jim's Deliveries: consisting of correspondence, invoices, and contracts.

14.0 Business, Radio: consisting of licenses and ephemera.

15.0 Business, Sawmill: consisting of correspondence, licenses, and receipts.

16.0 Business, Susie's Boarding House: consisting of correspondence and invoices.

17.0 Business, Assorted: consisting of correspondence, and invoices.

18.0 Maps and Schematics: consisting of a variety of topographic maps of North America, Canada, and Northern Labrador as well as a small assortment of radio frequency maps.

19.0 Music and Poetry: consisting of a variety of published songbooks, sheet music, song lyrics and poetry.

20.0 Audio Recordings: these materials have yet to be integrated into the collection.

21.0 Moving Images: consisting of VHS, beta, 8mm, DVD, Hi8 and Video8 materials that have been digitized.

22.0 Still Images: consisting of glass slides, photographs, photograph albums and slides. These have been digitized.

23.0 Flags: consisting of an assortment of flags.

24.0 Instruments: consisting of two brass instruments.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON IMPLEMENTATION

The James Robert Andersen Collection is less a static assembly of documents as it is an ongoing experiment in archival practice. Though the funding that allowed for the initial collection and arrangement of these materials at the Archives and Special Collections of the Queen Elizabeth II Library was provided by a generous grant from the Leslie Harris Centre of Regional Policy and Development at the Memorial University of Newfoundland, the ongoing process of description is squarely the domain of the community partners in this project. The Torngâsok Cultural Centre at Nain, the White Elephant Museum at Makkovik and the *Them Days* Labrador Archive at Happy Valley-Goose Bay are all actively involved in the ongoing process of information exchange, the first archival initiative of its kind between Labrador archival organizations and the Memorial University of Newfoundland.

Scope of Collection

Use of the materials in this collection is limited only by the imagination of its patrons. As there are no restrictions on their use (provided the intent of the patron is not-for-profit), our hope is that these materials will ultimately lead to richer understandings of Labrador, Nunatsiavut and the community of Makkovik.

For Researchers

Though in later years Uncle Jim's reputation was firmly established as an audiovisual documentarian, his diverse business interests and heavy involvement in the organizational operations and spiritual life of Makkovik have resulted in a singular set of textual documents. We imagine these would be of particular interest to researchers working on recent economic histories of Labrador and Nunatsiavut, the sociology of business in northern rural contexts, and the development of Makkovik itself. Researchers working on the contemporary history of the Moravian church and its function in Labrador communities will also find plenty of interest. The vast amount of audiovisual materials could serve the needs of a variety of researcher: from those interested in the development of home movie traditions in rural and northern Canada to ethnographers, genealogists, military historians, archaeologists, and natural resource analysts.

For Students

This collection is a logical resource for a range of students, both undergraduate and graduate. Students of Newfoundland and Labrador storytelling and musical traditions will find this collection to be of particular use though we imagine that anyone engaged in the study of cultural heritage (both tangible and intangible) in Newfoundland and Labrador will find this collection to be relevant.

For Media Producers

At present this collection contains 16 beta tapes, 2 8mm film reels, 230 VHS tapes, 65 Hi8 tapes, 112 Video8 tapes, 134 DVDs, 585 still photographs, and 795 photographic slides, all of which have been digitized. For the sake of patron convenience, moving images have been digitized at both large and small resolutions to accommodate any possible usage. High resolution versions only exist at the Archives and Special Collection of the Queen Elizabeth II Library at the Memorial University of Newfoundland. Patrons seeking to use these materials for for-profit use must seek permission from the Andersen family and outline a remuneration proposal. Copies

of the “For-Profit Audiovisual Request Form” are available through the Archives and Special Collections.

CONCLUSION

With three archival partners all committed to integrating these materials into their respective architectures, and with additional descriptive information forthcoming, we envision a group of collections that will flourish and ultimately recontextualize along with their host organizations. But perhaps even more importantly, the collection as it has been described to date represents only a portion of those materials that will ultimately constitute it. Over the coming months there will be significant additions to this collection including a set of handwritten musical manuscripts and a sizeable amount of audio recordings made at Uncle Jim’s residence. These represent important additions to the collection and equally important resources for a range of other students, researchers and media producers.

For now, however, we are pleased to offer the collection as it stands: a singular representation of Makkovik, Nunatsiavut.

REFERENCES

Uncle Jim Andersen

Not surprisingly, Uncle Jim himself has served as the subject of a number of media productions, both text and audiovisual. Patrons interested in learning more about Uncle Jim and his media work specifically would do well to consult these sources. Of course, Uncle Jim also appears as a subject in his own audiovisual work on occasion.

Audiovisual

Land & Sea: Uncle Jim. 25 mins, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 2006. Produced by Pauline Thornhill. English.

A short biographical piece on Uncle Jim. Patrons interested in purchasing a copy of this item should contact the media librarian at the St. John's CBC affiliate. Copies can also be viewed at the Labrador Institute in Happy Valley-Goose Bay or at the Queen Elizabeth II Library in St. John's.

James Andersen: Over 50 Years of Taking Pictures. 25 mins, Torngâsok Cultural Centre, c. 2008. Produced by Rhonda Buckley. English.

Created as a prefatory piece for the 2008 exhibit of the same name at The Rooms in St. John's, Ms. Buckley's short film places its emphasis on Uncle Jim's career as a media producer. Uncle Jim describes a number of the items in the exhibit in his own words. Copies of this film can be purchased through the Torngâsok Cultural Centre or can be viewed at the Labrador Institute in Happy Valley-Goose Bay.

Text

James Andersen: Over 50 Years of Taking Pictures. Torngâsok Cultural Centre, c. 2008. English and Inuttitut.

Also created as part of the 2008 exhibit of the same name, this text serves as a descriptive companion to a selection of still images from the collection. Copies of this text can be purchased through the Torngâsok Cultural Centre.

Archival Collections

The James Andersen Collection. Torngâsok Cultural Centre.

Though it is presently closed to the public, this collection stands as the appropriate companion to the present collection and served as the basis for the exhibition mentioned above. It consists exclusively of still and moving images. Inquiries about this collection should be directed to the Torngâsok Cultural Centre.

Makkovik

Makkovik occupies a singular place within the history of Nunatsiavut. Home to both Dorset and Thule cultures, nearby Ford's Bight served as the location upon which the first Moravian missionary to the Labrador coast, Johann Christian Erhardt (1718-1752), constructed his mission

house. The modern community of Makkovik was established in 1860 by a Norwegian immigrant and grandfather to Uncle Jim, Torsten Kverna Andersen. Under the employ of the Hudson's Bay Company, Kverna Andersen was first stationed at Rigolet in 1853 and later at Postville where he remained until 1859. Makkovik would serve as the site of his own industry. In 1896 Moravian missionaries returned to the area once again, selecting the community as its most southerly station in Labrador. The station provided stability to a number of settler families living within the region and, ultimately, a home for Inuit families from the north. Makkovik would serve as one of the designated relocation sites for the residents of Nutak and Hebron. With the signing of the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement in 2005 the community would take its place within the Inuit-governed region known as Nunatsiavut. Uncle Jim would witness both Canadian Confederation and the establishment of Nunatsiavut in his lifetime; his collection serves as a critical companion to a small but significant body of work on Makkovik.

Text

Schmuel Ben-Dor, *Moravian Beginnings in Labrador: Studies From a Symposium Held in Makkovik and Hopedale, Labrador*. St. Johns: Faculty of Arts Publications, MUN, 2009.

John C. Kennedy, *Holding the Line: Ethnic Boundaries in a Northern Labrador Community*. ISER Books, 1982.

Hans Rollmann, *Labrador Through Moravian Eyes: 250 Years of Art, Photographs & Records*. St. John's: Special Celebrations Corporation of Newfoundland and Labrador, Inc, Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation, 2002.

Hans Rollmann, *Moravian Beginnings in Labrador: Studies From a Symposium Held in Makkovik and Hopedale, Labrador*. St. Johns: Faculty of Arts Publications, MUN, 2009.

Audiovisual

Beverly Diamond, *From the Big Land: Music of Makkovik*. St. John's: MMaP, 2012.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Collection Syllabus – The James Robert Andersen Collection (13 pages)

Appendix B: Coll 421 – The James Robert Andersen Collection Catalogue (85 pages)

THE JAMES ROBERT ANDERSEN COLLECTION



All photos from the J.R. Andersen
Collection

A Singular Record of Makkovik, Nunatsiavut

James Robert Andersen (1919-2011) requires no introduction to the people of Labrador. Affectionately known as Uncle Jim, this life-long resident of Makkovik wore many hats throughout his life: a fisherman, wharfinger, shopkeeper, boarding house proprietor, postmaster, sawmill operator, delivery

contractor, musician, storyteller, and audiovisual documentarian. In the spring of 2011 Uncle Jim's family donated a vast amount of papers, photographs, films and other documents to the Archives and Special Collections of the Queen Elizabeth II Library of the Memorial University of Newfoundland.

Given its singular scope, we have prepared a collection syllabus: an overview of its contents, related materials and their possible uses for students, researchers, and media producers interested in Makkovik, Nunatsiavut and the Canadian North.



An Introduction to the Archival Project

The James Robert Andersen Collection is less a static assembly of documents as it is an ongoing experiment in archival practice. Though the funding that allowed for the initial collection and arrangement of these materials at the Archives and Special Collections of the Queen Elizabeth II Library was provided by a generous grant from the Leslie Harris Centre of Regional Policy and Development at the Memorial University of Newfoundland, the ongoing process of description is squarely the domain of the community partners in this project. The Torngâsok Cultural Centre at Nain, the White Elephant Museum at Makkovik and the *Them Days* Labrador Archive at Happy Valley-Goose Bay are all actively involved in the ongoing process of information exchange, the first archival initiative of its kind between Labrador archival organizations and the Memorial University of Newfoundland.

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Organizational Partners

This project was also made possible by the generous support of our community partners within Labrador. As a living archive, each organization is providing capacity towards the continued contextualization and use of these documents within Labrador.

THIS PROJECT IS DRIVEN BY A SHARED UNDERSTANDING THAT THESE MATERIALS SHOULD BE ACCESSIBLE TO THE PEOPLE OF LABRADOR

Information Exchange

Critical to the continued life of these materials is the ongoing process of information exchange. As any one archive is ultimately limited in its capacity to fully describe a collection, each of the community partners are committed to sharing information about these materials as it becomes available, ensuring each organization is able to use these materials in manners befitting their respective mandates.

One Collection, Many Lives

Presently, each of the community organizations has complete digital copies of all audiovisual materials in this collection and arrangements are being made for the sharing of digital copies of textual materials on an as need basis. Patrons interested in these materials have many possible points of access in Newfoundland and Labrador; each possesses a unique contextual value. *Them Days* is both a periodical and an archive; the White Elephant Museum is a culture and heritage interpretation centre for Makkovik; the Torngâsok Cultural Centre is the cultural arm of the Nunatsiavut Government. Each organization possesses a vast array of complementary artifacts, materials, and collections.



THEM DAYS

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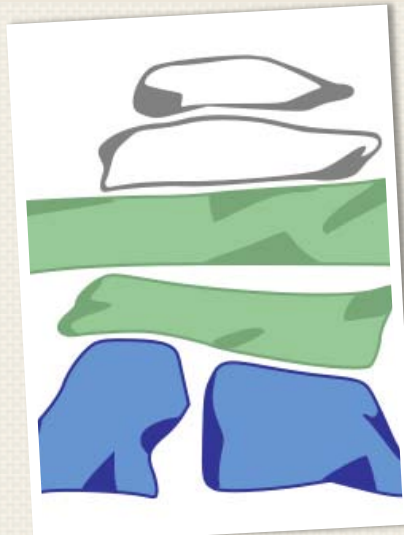
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What's In the Collection?

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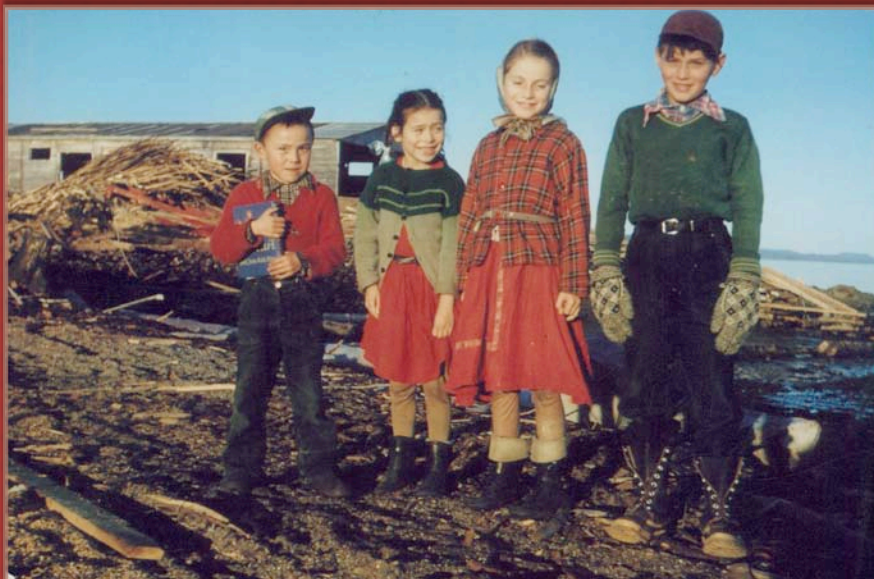
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24.0 Instruments: consisting of two brass instruments.

Uses of the Collection



Scope

Use of the materials in this collection is limited only by the imagination of its patrons. As there are no restrictions on their use (provided the intent of the patron is not-for-profit), our hope is that these materials will ultimately lead to richer understandings of Labrador, Nunatsiavut and the community of Makkovik.

For Researchers

Though in later years Uncle Jim's reputation was firmly established as an audiovisual documentarian, his diverse business interests and heavy involvement in the organizational operations and spiritual life of Makkovik have resulted in a singular set of textual documents. We imagine these would be of particular interest to researchers working on recent economic histories of Labrador and Nunatsiavut, the sociology of business in northern rural contexts, and the development of Makkovik itself. Researchers working on the contemporary history of the Moravian church and its function in Labrador communities will also find plenty of interest. The vast amount of audiovisual materials could serve the needs of a variety of researcher: from those interested in the development of home movie traditions in rural and northern Canada to ethnographers, genealogists, military historians, archaeologists, and natural resource analysts.

For Students

This collection is a logical resource for a range of students, both undergraduate and graduate. Students of Newfoundland and Labrador storytelling and musical traditions will find this collection to be of particular use though we imagine that anyone engaged in the study of cultural heritage (both tangible and intangible) in Newfoundland and Labrador will find this collection to be relevant.

For Media Producers

At present this collection contains 16 beta tapes, 2 8mm film reels, 230 VHS tapes, 65 Hi8 tapes, 112 Video8 tapes, 134 DVDs, 585 still photographs, and 795 photographic slides, all of which have been digitized. For the sake of patron convenience, moving images have been digitized at both large and small resolutions to accommodate any possible usage. High resolution versions only exist at the Archives and Special Collection of the Queen Elizabeth II Library at the Memorial University of Newfoundland. Patrons seeking to use these materials for for-profit use must seek permission from the Andersen family and outline a remuneration proposal. Copies of the "For-Profit Audiovisual Request Form" are available through the Archives and Special Collections.

Biography of James Robert Andersen

James Robert Andersen was born 21 April 1919 at Makkovik, Nunatsiavut, Newfoundland and Labrador and died at Happy Valley-Goose Bay 23 March 2011, the youngest of four children to John Albert and Susan Mary Mitchell. Widely known as Uncle Jim, Mr. Andersen was a life-long resident of Makkovik where he worked variously as a fisherman, trapper, wharfinger, shopkeeper, boarding house proprietor, postmaster, sawmill operator, delivery contractor, and Air Labrador agent. Many of these businesses were jointly operated with his wife Susie Andersen (1914-2000). Outside of Makkovik, Uncle Jim is generally known for his prolific photographic work, commemorated in the 2008 retrospective at The Rooms *James Andersen: Over 50 Years of Taking Pictures* and his receipt of the Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Councils' Rogers Arts Achievement Award in 2009. He is the grandson of Torsten Kverna Andersen, a Norwegian immigrant and Hudson's Bay Company employee who, in 1860, was the first settler at what is presently Makkovik.

Along with his siblings Bridget, Edward and Inga, Uncle Jim was likely born at home by a mid-wife, his aunt Bertha Andersen. He attended school at Makkovik until grade eight when he quit to join his father fishing in the family rooms at Dunn's Island. Much like his son, the elder Andersen had a flair for entrepreneurship. Though the fishery served as his primary occupation, the elder Andersen operated one of the first sawmills as well as one of the first wind-generated sources of electrical power on the North Coast of Labrador. It appears he was also, for a time, the owner of the schooner The Primrose. For Uncle Jim, however, fishing and trapping did not hold the

promise of a lifelong career and like many residents from the southern communities of present-day Nunatsiavut he sought employment at the expanding air force base on the southern shore of Lake Melville. In the winters of 1941 and 1942, Uncle Jim walked from Makkovik to Goose Bay to seek out seasonal work. The additional income was necessary to offset what were proving to be significant fluctuations in natural resource harvesting. The events of 1940 would provide him with added incentive to diversify his means of income; that year he would establish two significant relationships. The first was with his wife, Susan Mary Eliza Flowers (widely known as Aunt Susie). The second was with his camera, introduced to him by the Reverend George Harp.

From all appearances, Uncle Jim's experiences at Goose Bay seem to have given greater focus to those entrepreneurial skills he had begun to cultivate with his father. Upon his return to Makkovik, Uncle Jim resumed seasonal work as a salmon fisherman, assumed the operations of his father's sawmill, and inherited the position of postmaster from his Aunt Bertha, a position that would see him delivering mail by way of dog team and komatik under the auspices of Overland Limited. He also worked at the Labrador Services Division government store for a time. As he set about establishing his business interests, Uncle Jim supplemented his education with a range of distance courses. At the same time, his wife, Aunt Susie, began one of her many careers among which was a mid-wife. She would deliver 50 babies throughout her life.

Central as well to the lives of both Andersens was music. For Uncle Jim

this interest led him to learn a variety of instruments: accordion, piano, cello, fiddle, mandolin, guitar and trumpet. It also, importantly led him to become a recorder of music, first on reel-to-reel magnetic tape and eventually on audiocassette. For Aunt Susie, her interest was as an enthusiast. The pair would come to call their residence The Springdale Music Center, so marked by a sign that hung above their front door. The Andersen residence would serve as an important site for musical rehearsal and production during the course of their lives. It would function as the site for the Moravian Church's choir practice; Uncle Jim would serve as choirmaster for some 50 years alongside his sister Inga as church organist. The Andersen residence would also serve as the site of more informal musical gatherings, ranging from large parties to intimate performances until Uncle Jim's death.

Yet as critical as music was to Uncle Jim's life, its practice seems to have made little sense without the presence of some manner of camera. The Reverend Harp had provided Uncle Jim with a means to realize and give structure to a documentary imperative. Between the receipt of the Reverend's gift in 1940 to the purchase of his very own Jiffy Kodak in 1951 until his passing in 2011, Uncle Jim has been the author of tens of thousands of photographs (it is unlikely that an exact number can be determined) and thousands of feet of moving images. Not only was every musical event at the Springdale Music Center a suitable subject, so was seemingly every event in Makkovik that Uncle Jim had attended. His camera would become his defining instrument.

As his business interests expanded, so too did his renown as a

Biography of James Robert Andersen

documentarian. The years following Confederation would see the rapid expansion of infrastructure of Northern Labrador; Uncle Jim would come to both anticipate and facilitate this development. Aside from its role as the Springdale Music Center, the Andersen residence served as one of the prominent boarding houses in Makkovik and the site of a convenience store, made legendary as the only business to possess a beer license in the community for a number of years. Uncle Jim also operated Jim's Deliveries, a contracting service that, in addition to working with large-scale development initiatives, also accepted contracts for snow clearing and garbage removal from the community of Makkovik. He also worked as the Air Labrador agent, a position that placed him in direct proximity to any and all visitors to the community. These interests, along with Uncle Jim's gregarious personality, worked to promote the distinction of the Andersen residence and name in

Makkovik and beyond, one predicated upon the capture and circulation of images as much as hospitality.

Ultimately, it was the connections Uncle Jim had cultivated throughout the course of his working life that brought his work as photographic documentarian to the public eye. Hans Blohm, a guest at Andersen's boarding house served as the catalyst for the Labrador Inuit Association/Torngâsok Cultural Centre's 2002 purchase of a number of still and moving image items that served as the basis for the 2008 exhibition *James Andersen: Over 50 Years of Taking Pictures* at The Rooms. The purchase and subsequent exhibition established his reputation as a documentarian. He would serve as the subject of a number of print articles as well as the subject of a 2006 episode of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's *Land & Sea*, receiving greater prominence both within the province and across the Canadian North. The Newfoundland and

Labrador Arts Council recognized his achievements as an artist in 2009 bestowing him the Rogers Arts Achievement Award.

Though his eulogizers place particular emphasis on the camera as his instrument of choice, it is perhaps more appropriate to conceive of Uncle Jim's art as less rooted in the practice of photography and more accurately rooted in the practice of documentary. Granting that his output of still and moving images far exceeds any other media he generated, the object of his production is almost uniformly, a concern for tradition. As a musician, storyteller, photographer, and even as a collector of media, his practice reveals a concern for custom and continuity.

Compiled with information generously provided by Ms. Joan Andersen and Ms. Annie Evans.



In His Own Words

The Movies Come to Makkovik

Yes, ah, we used to want, a movie projector. I think we did see it, someone came here, I don't quite remember now if it was the school or someone else showed movies. Well the first movies was showed in 1926 in the mission, that was ah, Captain MacMillan. Still movies. That was the first we ever saw. But then after, this was after Confederation, people begin to say. Then aunt Lovey, she, Uncle Sam Jacque's wife, she was an outstanding woman, she said to me and Bill one day she said why don't youse get together

and try to get a movie projector and we have movies she said I'll do my best and we'll keep something she said. I'm sure she said if we go around we'll get one. So that's what we done. We applied to ah, Department of Education and we bought a movie projector. That was, of course, most was black and white, Hop Along Cassidy. But was no trouble to get a full room if you got a movie projector. I had a small ah, auxiliary engine here about 1500 watts. And we had wires running over to the old hall, where Bert Winters lives now, that's about 100 yards or further. We

did that for couple years. Then Bill and I, we bought the first diesel engine here in town. 5 kilowatt ah, beaut of diesel, we bought, and that went on for years. We, we'd run it, we'd have turns running it, it'd run till 12 o'clock at night and then we'd settle down. And on wash days, we'd have special wash days, couple days a week. And we'd start the diesel and let the diesel run all day for the women washing and that. And then ah, Newfoundland hydro came along.

- 1998

The Millhouse

Mom always wanted a piano. She was musical. They was all musical. Dad promised her a piano, sometime I s'pose when he seen the means. This particular time he went to St. John's. Stayed at the Crosby Hotel.

The Stones and the Framptons from Smith Sound (now called Monroe). They were there buying their winter supplies. Dad was telling them about the piano he was going to buy at Charles Hutton's. They said, oh no, don't buy a piano, get a sawmill. So the next morning he went down, cancelled the piano and bought a sawmill. He bought a sawmill in the fall, from the Acadia Gas Company on Water Street, but it only came in the spring, the engine. The schooners was down. Lot of schooners in Sally's Cove. The Framptons and the Stones was there. So they put off the engine out to Dunn's Island from the old Sagona. On the way in, he (Dad) called to Harry Stone's in Sally's Cove. Oh my gosh. Broke open the crate. Tore open the crate. Took batteries out of the engine house. Started the stationary engine right there in the boat. They was always big schooner builders and sawed all their own lumber with sawmills. They brought him up, of course. Two or three boats come up from Sally's Cove and took the big engine out of the boat. The engine which is over there on the block now. In the fall when Dad come, he had enough lumber sawed with the pit saw, what he was preparing for it, and erected that sawmill in 1917. And the last time I used that sawmill was in 1975. Now then, I was always doing big blunders, very wrong things. When Dad build that sawmill he had two pieces of

lumber about six by ten. Two heavy pieces of lumber 35 foot long, what Mr. Jannasch give Dad after they finished building the church. So that was what Dad had erected in the mill house, to erect the bench on, the bench what the logs goes on. And we had that all them years. In the end, I sold them. I sold the engine and the bench what was put together like something growed and daddy had never seen a sawmill bench put together before. That was a very, very wrong thing for me to do. That should 'a been still there, until it rotted down. Everything was solid when I took it down.

I sold it to Ted (Andersen). I bought the engine back for \$300, and I put 'er on the block there, as a memory. Our sawmill was so useful. If someone wanted komatik bars, komatik runners, p'raps something sawed for a house. Well they would cut logs on the half. Dad would keep half the lumber, and they would have their half. It was a wonderful system.

- 2009



In His Own Words

Music

My mum had an old one (guitar) from our home in Adlatok, but it was old and it had gut strings and so on. But I had the first guitar and I learned it and in 1951 I started the first concert party where there was 5 or 6 of them. From that on, music start to grow and ah, different ones begin to play. But, I played the guitar, and dad always played the fiddle, so I learned the fiddle. And ah, later on my brother and I, because he played the fiddle, we used to play in church as a duet, my sister, was an organist, she played on the big pipe organ in church, using the foot pedal when she was 16 years old. And I played the cello but, ah, I'm just telling you but nothing to brag on what I can do, it's just the instruments I play. The most I have ah, expensive, instrument is pull piano and pull organ, and mostly I always keep that on the organ, keep the music, the organ music, playing the slow Moravians, perhaps it bothers a lot because ah that's rock and roll life, it's very fast and make it wanna go fast, and you

won't see anyone dancing cause you can't get anyone to dance here in Makkovik now if you paid them. But I like the old tunes, the old tunes that takes you back. I could get up in the night, in the middle of the night, some nights, like this is natural, perhaps anyone can't sleep, I can get up and play some tunes. That music can come right from my heart, just playing some old Moravian tunes and go back to dad and, that's my life.

- 2009



Wedding Day

A pretty day. Eddie White was here. A nice young fellow from St. John's... store manager. Friendly young fellow..He'd be over Uncle Wilson's, he'd visit here... he had a beautiful gramophone what we never had. Bring up his gramophone and some records in the evening and 'twould be a real show. Oh and the good. That summer he was going away, and Dad told him, I think Jim is going to be married next year. So he went away to St. John's but before he went away he asked me what would I like for 'en to bring me... if I was going to get married. Well, I always admired the people coming from Strawberry, Iron Bounds or Manak's, coming to church with double breast shirt suits on. I thought twas wonderful, so I told him I'd like to have a suit of clothes, double breast, navy blue. Serge suit. So when he come back from St. John's, he brought me a suit so that's what I had. I thought I was the king. Dressed up for it, me and Susie. We didn't have any brides boys or girls but it worked out all right. We had a church full of people. Inga played the organ. I always remember that. How beautiful she played. Nice, sung hard. That's how we got married.

- 2010



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GENEROUSLY PROVIDED BY MS. JOAN ANDERSEN OF THE WHITE
ELEPHANT MUSEUM.

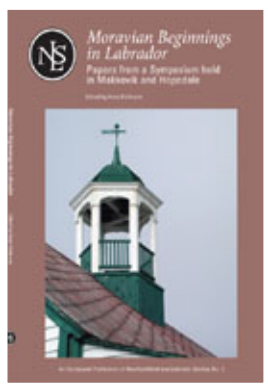
Additional Resources on Makkovik

Makkovik occupies a singular place within the history of Nunatsiavut. Home to both Dorset and Thule cultures, nearby Ford's Bight served as the location upon which the first Moravian missionary to the Labrador coast, Johann Christian Erhardt (1718-1752), constructed his mission house. The modern community of Makkovik was established in 1860 by a Norwegian immigrant and grandfather to Uncle Jim, Torsten Kverna Andersen. Under the employ of the

Hudson's Bay Company, Kverna Andersen was first stationed at Rigolet in 1853 and later at Postville where he remained until 1859. Makkovik would serve as the site of his own industry. In 1896 Moravian missionaries returned to the area once again, selecting the community as its most southerly station in Labrador. The station provided stability to a number of settler families living within the region and, ultimately, a home for Inuit families from the north. Makkovik would serve

as one of the designated relocation sites for the residents of Nutak and Hebron. With the signing of the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement in 2005 the community would take its place within the Inuit-governed region known as Nunatsiavut. Uncle Jim would witness both Canadian Confederation and the establishment of Nunatsiavut in his lifetime; his collection serves as a critical companion to a small but significant body of work on Makkovik.

THE ORIGIN OF THE NAME MAKKOVIK IS OBSCURE BUT IS BELIEVED TO BE AN INCORRECT TRANSMISSION OF THE INUITUTUT WORD MEANING PLACE WITH TWO NAMES, OR PLACE WITH TWO PARTS. THE FIRST WRITTEN REFERENCE TO "ZWEI BUCHTEN MACHOVIK" (TWO BAY MACHOVIK) APPEARS IN JENS HAVENS AND JOHANN LUDWIG BECK'S ACCOUNT OF THEIR 1775 JOURNEY TO THE AREA OF PRESENT DAY MAKKOVIK BAY AND FORD'S BIGHT.



HANS ROLLMANN

Moravian Beginnings in Labrador: Studies From a Symposium Held in Makkovik and Hopedale, Labrador. St. Johns: Faculty of Arts Publications, MUN, 2009.

Click [here](#) for more details.

SHMUEL BEN-DOR

Makkovik: Eskimos and Settlers in a Labrador Community. St. John's: ISER Books, 1966.

Click [here](#) for more details.



Additional Resources on Makkovik



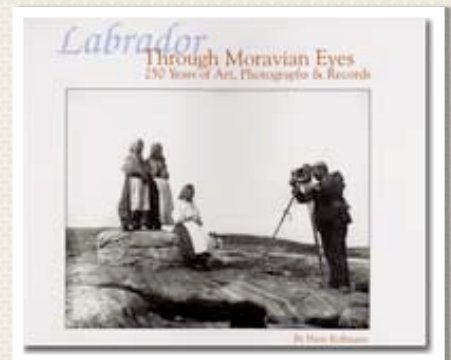
BEVERLY DIAMOND

From the Big Land: Music of Makkovik. St. John's: MMaP, 2012.

Click [here](#) for more details.

HANS ROLLMANN

Labrador Through Moravian Eyes: 250 Years of Art, Photographs & Records.
St. John's: Special Celebrations Corporation of Newfoundland and
Labrador, Inc, Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation, 2002.



JOHN C. KENNEDY

Holding the Line: Ethnic Boundaries in a Northern Labrador Community. ISER Books, 1982.

Click [here](#) for more details.

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO, MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY OF NEWFOUNDLAND, UNIVERSITÉ LAVAL

The Labrador Inuit through Moravian Eyes.

An electronic resource available [here](#).



Additional Resources on Uncle Jim

Not surprisingly, Uncle Jim himself has served as the subject of a number of media productions, both text and audiovisual. Patrons interested in learning more about Uncle Jim and his media work specifically would do well to consult these sources. Of course, Uncle Jim also appears as a subject in his own audiovisual work on occasion.

Audiovisual

Land & Sea: Uncle Jim. 25 mins, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 2006. Produced by Pauline Thornhill. English.

A short biographical piece on Uncle Jim. Patrons interested in purchasing a copy of this item should contact the media librarian at the St. John's CBC affiliate. Copies can also be viewed at the Labrador Institute in Happy Valley-Goose Bay or at the Queen Elizabeth II Library in St. John's.

James Andersen: Over 50 Years of Taking Pictures. 25 mins, Torngâsok Cultural Centre, c. 2008. Produced by Rhonda Buckley. English.

Created as a prefatory piece for the 2008 exhibit of the same name at The Rooms in St. John's, Ms. Buckley's short film places its emphasis on Uncle Jim's career as a media producer. Uncle Jim describes a number of the items in the exhibit in his own words. Copies of this film can be purchased through the Torngâsok Cultural Centre or can be viewed at the Labrador Institute in Happy Valley-Goose Bay.

Text

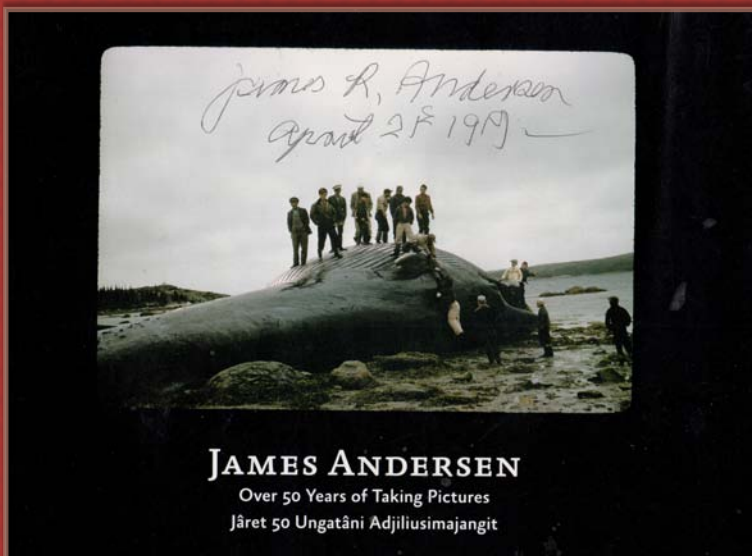
James Andersen: Over 50 Years of Taking Pictures. Torngâsok Cultural Centre, c. 2008. English and Inuttitut.

Also created as part of the 2008 exhibit of the same name, this text serves as a descriptive companion to a selection of still images from the collection. Copies of this text can be purchased through the Torngâsok Cultural Centre.

Archival Collections

The James Andersen Collection. Torngâsok Cultural Centre.

Though it is presently closed to the public, this collection stands as the appropriate companion to the present collection and served as the basis for the exhibition mentioned above. It consists exclusively of still and moving images. Inquiries about this collection should be directed to the Torngâsok Cultural Centre.



Lives to Come



Contact Information

Archives and Special Collections

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Memorial University of Newfoundland

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The James Robert Andersen
Collection, COLL-421

What this document has attempted to contextualize is the *first* incarnation of this collection. With three archival partners all committed to integrating these materials into their respective architectures, and with additional descriptive information forthcoming, we envision a group of collections that will flourish and ultimately recontextualize along with their host organizations.

But perhaps even more importantly, the collection as it has been described to date represents only a portion of those materials that will ultimately constitute it. Over the coming months there will be significant additions to this collection including a set of handwritten musical

manuscripts and a sizeable amount of audio recordings made at Uncle Jim's residence. These represent important additions to the collection and equally important resources for a range of other students, researchers and media producers.

For now, however, we are pleased to offer the collection as it stands: a singular representation of Makkovik, Nunatsiavut.



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